



Identifying like-minded audiences for global warming public engagement campaigns: An audience segmentation analysis and tool development

Author(s): Maibach EW, Leiserowitz A, Roser-Renouf C, Mertz C
Year: 2011
Journal: PLoS One. 6 (3): e17571

Abstract:

Background: Achieving national reductions in greenhouse gas emissions will require public support for climate and energy policies and changes in population behaviors. Audience segmentation – a process of identifying coherent groups within a population – can be used to improve the effectiveness of public engagement campaigns. **Methodology/Principal Findings:** In Fall 2008, we conducted a nationally representative survey of American adults (n Euro Surveillance (Bulletin Europeen Sur Les Maladies Transmissibles; European Communicable Disease Bulletin) 2,164) to identify audience segments for global warming public engagement campaigns. By subjecting multiple measures of global warming beliefs, behaviors, policy preferences, and issue engagement to latent class analysis, we identified six distinct segments ranging in size from 7 to 33% of the population. These six segments formed a continuum, from a segment of people who were highly worried, involved and supportive of policy responses (18%), to a segment of people who were completely unconcerned and strongly opposed to policy responses (7%). Three of the segments (totaling 70%) were to varying degrees concerned about global warming and supportive of policy responses, two (totaling 18%) were unsupportive, and one was largely disengaged (12%), having paid little attention to the issue. Certain behaviors and policy preferences varied greatly across these audiences, while others did not. Using discriminant analysis, we subsequently developed 36-item and 15-item instruments that can be used to categorize respondents with 91% and 84% accuracy, respectively. **Conclusions/Significance:** In late 2008, Americans supported a broad range of policies and personal actions to reduce global warming, although there was wide variation among the six identified audiences. To enhance the impact of campaigns, government agencies, non-profit organizations, and businesses seeking to engage the public can selectively target one or more of these audiences rather than address an undifferentiated general population. Our screening instruments are available to assist in that process.

Source: Ask your librarian to help locate this item.

Resource Description

Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience:

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

audience to whom the resource is directed

Public

Exposure : ☒

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Ecosystem Changes, Unspecified Exposure

Geographic Feature: ☒

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location: ☒

resource focuses on specific location

United States

Health Impact: ☒

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

General Health Impact

Mitigation/Adaptation: ☒

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Mitigation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern: ☒

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Low Socioeconomic Status, Racial/Ethnic Subgroup

Other Racial/Ethnic Subgroup: Black; Hispanic

Other Vulnerable Population: People with low education; Women

Resource Type: ☒

format or standard characteristic of resource

Policy/Opinion, Research Article

Timescale: ☒

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified